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ABSTRACT

Many U.S. citizens including educators, community leaders, youth workers, other human service persons, and young people tend to be apolitical, timid, cynical, or disdainful about the political process. But knowledge of the political process, when properly applied, is portable wealth and eminently usable power. Every vote can count when backed by solid facts, deep commitment, and persistent application of simple political skills. This guide is based on the conviction that people need to adjust many of their counterproductive attitudes about the political process and then to hone a few easily acquired political skills. These attitudes and skills will empower people to engage successfully with those who control the purse-strings and administrative powers that play such decisive roles in the rise and fall of many public and nonprofit organizations. It stresses the importance of building human relationships, rather than mere knowledge of the political process or following a set of "how-to" steps. The guide is divided into the following chapters: "Power and Powerlessness"; "On Credit in the Bank"; "Advocacy: A State of Mind"; "From Self-Affirmation to Political Effectiveness"; "Homework Pays Off"; "Politicians' Views of Educators--In Their Own Words"; "A Start toward Bridge-Building"; "Personal (and Persistent) Commitment"; "Working at a Distance"; "Let George--And the Association--Do It!"; "Testimony--Only the 40-Yard Line"; "Advancing toward the Goal Line"; "In Conclusion--And at the Beginning"; and "Going Deeper: A Bibliography." (BT)

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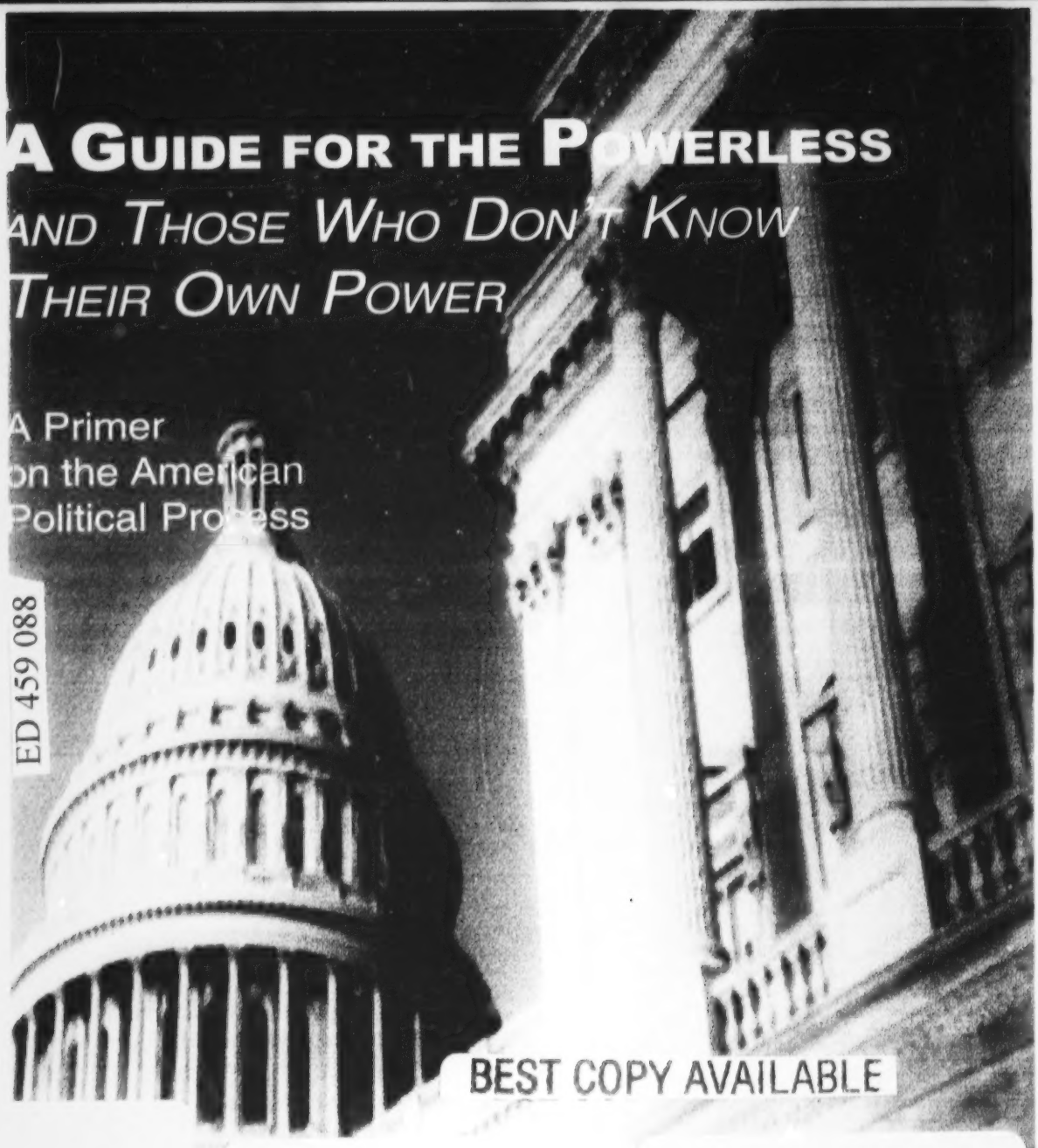

A Guide for the Powerless

and Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power

A Primer
on the American
Political Process

ED 459 088

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ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

The **American Youth Policy Forum** (AYPF) is a non-partisan, non-profit professional development organization based in Washington, DC. AYPF provides varied learning opportunities for individuals working on policy issues affecting youth at the local, state, and national levels. Participants in our learning activities include: Congressional staff and Executive Branch aides, officers of professional and national associations, Washington-based state office staff, researchers and evaluators, and education and public affairs media.

Our goal is to enable policymakers and their aides to be more effective in their professional duties and of greater service – to Congress, the Administration, state legislatures, governors and national organizations – in the development, enactment, and implementation of sound policies affecting our nation's young people. We believe that knowing more about youth issues, both intellectually and experientially, will help our participants formulate better policies and do their jobs more effectively.

AYPF does not lobby or take positions on pending legislation. We work to develop better communication, greater understanding and enhanced trust among these professionals, and to create a climate that will result in constructive action. Each year AYPF conducts 35 to 45 learning events (forums, discussion groups, field trips and study tours) and develops policy reports disseminated nationally. For more information about these activities and other publications, visit our website at www.aypf.org.

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A GUIDE FOR THE POWERLESS

AND THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW THEIR OWN POWER

A PRIMER ON THE AMERICAN POLITICAL PROCESS

SAMUEL HALPERIN

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ABOUT THE GUIDE

Many Americans – including educators, community leaders, youth workers, other human service professionals, and young people – tend to be apolitical, timid, cynical or disdainful about the political process. We resist becoming part of the give-and-take of policymaking at the very same time that we seek political and financial support for our programs and services in the public interest.

This guide is based on the conviction that we need to adjust many of our counterproductive attitudes about the political process and, then, to hone a few easily-acquired political skills. It is these attitudes and skills that will empower us to engage successfully with those who control the purse-strings and administrative powers that play such decisive roles in the rise and fall of so many public and nonprofit organizations.

In 1981, I wrote an earlier version of this guide which distilled learning I had absorbed as a political scientist, as a government official acting as legislative liaison between Congress and the Executive Branch, and as head of the Institute for Educational Leadership, a policy-oriented nonprofit organization that helped prepare over 5,000 educators and human services professionals for leadership roles across the country. The intervening 20 years have taught me more, and this substantially revised guide incorporates much of this "new learning."

Powerlessness is an unacceptable condition in any facet of life or work. It is doubly intolerable for those who work in the human services and whose mission is to help empower others. At a time when society has more reliable knowledge than ever about what works to improve human lives, we must use that knowledge in dealing with our elected and appointed officials. Out of such effective advocacy will flow stronger programs and fruitful, lasting relationships with our legislators and other policymakers.

Recent history reminds us that every vote has large potential consequences. Every voice can also count when backed by solid facts, deep commitment and persistent application of simple political skills.

A Guide for the Powerless – And Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power shows how, as a practical matter, we can reclaim our power and trade powerlessness for a new sense of potency in the political system. This potency applies to all strata of the political system and to the people who work within them, whether elected or appointed: members of Congress, state legislators, local council members, elected board and commission members, key agency executives, and others.

Knowledge of the political process, when properly applied, is portable wealth and eminently usable power. Let us learn, apply and prosper.

Samuel Halperin
Washington, D.C.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Samuel Halperin has held leadership positions in academia, the federal government, a foundation and non-profit organizations since earning his doctorate in Political Science from Washington University, St. Louis in 1956.

The American Youth Policy Forum, which Dr. Halperin founded in 1993, is a professional development program for policy aides providing information and experiences helpful to the development of an effective youth development, education and employment training system for the United States. From 1969 to 1981, he directed leadership training programs at The George Washington University, including the nationwide Institute for Educational Leadership.

As a Congressional Fellow of the American Political Science Association, Dr. Halperin worked on U.S. Senate and House of Representatives committees dealing with major education legislation. As Director of the U.S. Office of Education's Office of Congressional Relations and Assistant U.S. Commissioner of Education for Legislation, he helped develop such landmark measures as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Higher Education Acts of 1963 and 1965, and many others. In 1966, Dr. Halperin joined the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare where, as Deputy Assistant Secretary under Secretaries John W. Gardner and Wilbur J. Cohen, he participated in the passage of scores of Great Society measures in education and the social services. For these efforts, he was twice awarded HEW's Superior Service Award, HEW's Distinguished Service Award, and the National Association of State Boards of Education Distinguished Service Award.

As study director of "Youth and America's Future: The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship" from 1986-1992, he was responsible for development of the Commission's major studies: *The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America* and *The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families* (1988), and three dozen research reports and monographs on youth development, school-to-careers transition and national service. In 1998, he edited *The Forgotten Half Revisited: American Youth and Young Families, 1988-2008.*

Dr. Halperin is the author or editor of a dozen books on the political process and educational policy issues and over 100 articles. He has taught at Wayne State, American, and Duke Universities and Teachers College-Columbia University, and lectured at many others. His service on boards and advisory bodies includes the Peace Corps, Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Board on Education and Training, National School Volunteer Program, Jobs for the Future, D.C. Private Industry Council, Center for Youth as Resources, The Merrow Report on PBS, Associates for Renewal in Education, National School-to-Work Advisory Council. He was twice awarded the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps as well as the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award of Jobs for the Future, the President's Medal of The George Washington University, the Harry S. Truman Award of the American Association of Community Colleges, and the Lewis Hine Award for Service to Children and Youth of the National Child Labor Committee.

POWER & POWERLESSNESS

"Things don't just happen. They are made to happen."
-John F. Kennedy

"The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as it is. We must work with it on its terms if we are to change to the kind of world we would like it to be."
-Saul Alinsky

"Knowledge will forever govern ignorance and a people that mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power that knowledge brings."
-James Madison

This guide is about *power* or, more precisely, about the personal reclamation of power and the purging of feelings of powerlessness, a widespread malady in contemporary American society.

Most of us think of powerlessness as an unfortunate human condition. Most of us have experienced its pain and we deliberately seek to avoid its disabilities. At the same time, power*ful*ness is a much-maligned concept among our population. An individual deemed to be personally powerful is often popularly equated with being less than a fully moral or good human being.

When the concept of power is used in this guide, it refers to its Latin root, *potere*, "to be able to." *Able* to understand and *able* to operate in the political process with a fair degree of skill. *Able* to use our political institutions for no less than the protection and extension of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Today, widespread cynicism and non-participation in the political process are rife. As former cabinet member Robert Reich has observed:

> *"Democracy is a fragile experiment. In an era when almost everything is bought and sold, when packaging and spin are almost indistinguishable from reality, and when ulterior motives seem to lurk behind every friendly encounter, our democratic process needs special handling."*

No wonder that so many Americans are "turned off" to the political process, feel that they have "no stake in the system," and don't exercise even the most minimal requirement of citizenship—voting. But cynicism is the great enemy of democracy. Democracy does not flourish without an informed citizenry interacting with their representatives.

Like former Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, I believe that "The highest office in a democracy is that of citizen." Widespread citizen participation in the political process is essential for the fulfillment of both self and society. While there are theoretical dangers in urging "everyone" to participate in the political process—especially since I do not know what ends others will seek with their mastery of the system—it is worth taking the risk. For the fact is that today—here and now—millions of our fellow citizens are needlessly exposed to hazard because they lack the inclination, the understanding and the courage to advance their own interests and to protect themselves from political decisions brought about by powerful others. So it is both morally right and eminently practical to encourage *informed and effective participation* in the political process.

Under the American constitutional system, unlike in other countries, citizens are not guaranteed substantive policy outcomes, like quality education, decent housing, and health care. Rather, the United States guarantees *political rights*. This means that we have the opportunity to influence the shape of public policy, to achieve the substantive policy outcomes we desire. Political rights–voting, free speech, free press, freedom of association, and petitioning our government for the redress of grievances—(see First Amendment to the Constitution) – are ways we commonly use to influence and control our government at all levels. More specifically, we work to put "our people" into public office through elections, and then we advocate and lobby in an effort to persuade them when they take office to behave in ways we favor. *When vigorous electoral activity is joined to effective lobbying of officeholders, the combination can be particularly powerful.* Thus, we need to recognize at the outset

that influencing elections and lobbying are not dirty concepts, not shady, extra-constitutional acts, but the bedrock basis of our representative form of government. As Thomas Jefferson wrote two centuries ago, "The right of our fellow citizens to represent to the public functionaries their opinion on proceedings interesting to them is unquestionably a constitutional right."

Another assumption underlies this guide: the fact that the American political system is, to an amazing extent, *open to participation and to reshaping by laypersons.* People of all kinds can access it and, in America's long pragmatic tradition, make a positive difference in their own lives and in the society around them. Admittedly, some people and interest groups wield greater power than others. However, in the nonprofit world, far greater disparities are attributable to ignorance of the political process and to our cynicism and reluctance to get involved with it by applying the relatively straight-forward rules of the game. Thus, *powerlessness is mostly self-imposed.*

By the same token, powerlessness can be overcome through careful preparation and diligent effort. The institutions of power are much like a coral sponge. Seen from the outside they appear infinitely variegated, complicated, impossible to penetrate. On closer inspection though, most people have found American political institutions surprisingly permeable, quick to soak up new ideas and to incorporate new participants. Thus, the world isn't divided neatly into two classes of people, "the powerful" and "the powerless." Rather, people–particularly when acting in organized association with others in coalitions and alliances—can access an incredible amount of unmobilized, unrealized or potential power. How interesting it is that the same Latin root for "power," *potere,* is also the root for the word "potential"!

The starting point for all success is an unyielding belief that *we can* succeed, that *we can* make a difference in the political process. Thus, effectiveness in advocacy is in large part a matter of *will and determination.* As Lao-Tzu taught, "We can never exceed our own expectations."

This *attitudinal change lies at the heart of this guide* and is the catalyst for acquiring insight and political skills. As one rejects powerlessness and tries out one's "political wings," each success brings greater confidence. Mastery of new skills brings a sense of elation. Appetite comes with eating. So too, the transformation of personal power through the exercise of some quite simple and accessible political processes leads to ultimate *self-determination* in the world around us. And that is why the subtitle of this guide is–*And Those Who Don't Know Their Own Power!*

In offering practical counsel on how to go about realizing one's objectives in the political process, I have adopted a degree of generalization that may trouble some readers. To Albert Einstein, "Abandonment of generalization...means to relinquish understanding altogether." But, in the words of one of history's great aphorists, Oliver Wendell Holmes: "The chief end of man is to frame general propositions, and no general proposition is worth a damn."

Yet, generalization about American democratic politics is necessary if the reader is to be spared a heavy treatise on the many "special cases" inherent in our messy intergovernmental system of political decisionmaking.

Obviously, too, this guide cannot be more than an introduction to advocacy, lobbying and the legislative process. Once over the threshold of these initial forms of participation, other forms of political involvement will become far more accessible, manageable, and enjoyable. Readings listed in the bibliography at the end of this guide provide a good starting point for the political novice eager to learn more. They also offer a deepened understanding of how and why some people and interests manage to turn their latent potential into usable power.

The political world is messy, inexact and not subject to neat and precise rules. Thus, this guide should not be viewed as a precise blueprint for achieving success but as a *compass* pointing to successful and time-tested practices in the political arena. Let us begin our journey of exploration and change.

ON CREDIT IN THE BANK

"Too late to dig well when house on fire."
-ancient Chinese proverb

"The time to make friends is before you need them."
-Lyndon Baines Johnson

In ten words, L.B.J., one of America's all-time consummate politicians and legislative masters, summed up a world of practical wisdom. Representative, senator, majority leader, later president, Johnson verbalized that, at some point, all of us are going to want something from others. Perhaps the best way to assure that we will get it is to have prepared the groundwork long in advance.

Politicians often speak of building "credit" with those who receive their favors or services. They feel duty-bound—tantamount to a professional code of honor—to give and to receive "chits" or "I.O.U.s" from those they aid and to those who aid them. This is not to say that every deed is done in the expectation that the receiving party "owes me one." It does signify that, particularly in a democratic, pluralistic society, *mutual assistance* is a deeply ingrained value. Politicians and policymakers expect to serve others. In turn, they expect to be supported in attaining their objectives, electorally and substantively on the issues.

If we accept that the best guarantee of future success in achieving our objectives is to plan ahead, to build friendships and political credit before they need to be redeemed or tested in situations of real need, we may then ask "what do *I* have to offer a politician?" The answer is quite simple: anything that is perceived by the officeholder as enhancing his or her performance on the job. This includes, for example, providing the information and political support necessary for effective policymaking; offering opportunities for winning favorable publicity, public recognition, and esteem; and the wide array of activities which contribute to the expectation of re-election or maintenance in appointive office.

Policymakers act from a complex set of motivations. Most often, they act because they believe their choice is the "right" or "best" public policy and, perhaps, because they are intellectually intrigued by the issue. As elected officials, they also calculate whether their behavior will contribute to their political self-interest, not necessarily because they expect a narrow *quid pro quo*. On many an issue with low prospects for near-term political payoff, they may look to national (or even international) audiences and to their assessments of what is likely to prove wise public policy in the long run. In the political process, in short, there is a pairing of personal intelligence and deep commitment to sound public service, as well as the more commonplace and practical wish to win and to retain office. Policymakers like to assure themselves that their public duties and personal political interests co-exist without conflict. They hope that taking care of their reputations, their supporters and their constituents, while pursuing what they conceive to be in the public interest—"being right on the issues" — will translate, directly or indirectly, into a popular decision for their retention in office or elevation to higher office.

While legislators expect to legislate laws, large and small, they quickly understand that they must first provide a wide range of services, some quite mundane. As former U.S. Representative and later New York Governor Hugh Carey used to proclaim: To my constituents, supporters, and financial backers, "I'm *chronically* available!" Ample experience teaches that if elected politicians shun the voters' needs, they'll soon be back among them.

Let us look more closely at some specific ways to build up political credit. For starters, most elected officeholders spend enormous amounts of energy trying to learn what their constituents "really want," and even more, what's needed to "make things right in the world." Therefore, clear expressions of organizational, community, or individual interests, needs, and demands are inherently useful to policymakers. Even if they eventually act to the contrary, knowing who wants what and why is helpful in mapping the political terrain and defining the degree of maneuverability ("wiggle room") available to the policymaker.

In a society in which fewer and fewer citizens bother to vote,[1] all politicians are impressed by the energy and determination of coalitions, groups and individual citizens who are perceived to be capable of turning out the vote. Anyone—teacher, preacher, housewife, student activist or retiree—who demonstrates an ability to produce above-average voter turnout is almost immediately recognized and courted by the local political power structure. Sometimes, in this era of close elections, a person who can influence only 100 voters is considered a veritable "powerhouse." (In Chicago, you may even get to be precinct captain, traditionally the coveted first rung on the ladder of political advancement.)

How one goes about being perceived as capable of influencing blocs of votes is as varied as the personalities who comprise our polyglot society. Some do it by virtue of their formal leadership of clubs and organizations, family clans, churches, unions, and veterans' and ethnic associations. Others earn that reputation by informal means: activity in a host of civic causes, vigorous personal involvement with friends, neighbors, colleagues at work. Still others by a display of "charismatic" or leadership qualities—courage, intelligence, articulation, self-confidence, energy, and persistence, among others.

Politicians prize opportunities for public exposure through mention in organizational newsletters, invitations to speak, and inclusion in social gatherings, large and small. Increasingly, in a highly fragmented society, the person who arranges these opportunities for public figures

[1] The percentage of the eligible adult population casting a ballot in a national presidential election has declined almost steadily since the Kennedy-Nixon contest of 1960 when 62.8 percent voted. In 1972, the first year in which 18-20 year-olds could vote, turnout was 55.2 percent; in 1996, 49.7 percent, one of the lowest turnouts in this century for a presidential election; in 2000, about 51.2 percent. In state and local elections, turnout is generally far lower, with outcomes often decided by five percent or less of the eligible voters.

In the cliff-hanger elections of 2000, a small fraction of one percent of the votes — only 100-500 votes — determined outcomes in several states' electoral votes and "swing" seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. Vice President Gore outpolled Governor Bush nationally by almost 540,000 votes out of 103.5 million cast. However, he lost the certified Florida tally, and the presidency, by 537 votes — less than a ten-thousandth of one percent of the over six million ballots cast in the state.

is perceived as "an influential"—one who directly or indirectly creates the exposure which, in turn, is translated into votes.

Regardless of how it is done, almost all who enjoy the reputation of being "able to deliver" get there by *self-awareness* that their position and their activism is translatable into political currency or "clout." They are acting very much within the American democratic tradition and, therefore, they have earned the right to an audience with policymakers, an opportunity to state their case for change. As they say in the lobbies of the legislatures, "You can get more with a kind word and political clout than with a kind word alone."

ADVOCACY: A STATE OF MIND

"Ideas are great arrows, but they must have a bow. Politics is the bow of idealism."
-Bill Moyers

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters..."
-Frederick Douglass

"...as citizens, we have every right to raise hell when we see injustice done, or the public interest betrayed, or the public process corrupted."
-John W. Gardner

While many citizens are active in organizations and communities and are appropriately considered leaders, relatively few such persons recognize that their activity can be translated into *political* gains. Too many persons of accomplishment and influence have been "depoliticized" in the sense that they fail to see the legitimate connection between their position in society and specific goals and values which they favor. Too often, like most Americans, they denigrate politicians and policymakers and see themselves as a world apart from the "nasty, noisy, dirty business" of politics—the process of deciding who gets what, when and how. No one—neither high school civics teacher, college political science instructor, nor priest or minister—has ever successfully driven home the point that politics is nothing more nor less than the process of distributing society's scarce resources, not just money, but opportunities, safety, prestige, and other aspects of quality of life.

As the ancient Greeks viewed it, politics embraces the civic obligations of running the affairs of the *polis*, or city state. All of us, after all, are governed, affected, shaped by the political process. The central questions, then, are: Shall we, ourselves, act to shape our own destiny, to realize our own power—or shall we allow others to "do it" to us? Will we confront the pain and consequences of our own

sense of powerlessness and, in so doing, reclaim the power we have given away?

The most successful lobbyists and political activists are generally those who have answered these questions affirmatively, with a sense that their actions are not only legitimate but, indeed, essential to the process of holding our public officials accountable to what we, as citizens and taxpayers, feel is sound public policy. Only when we give psychological and practical affirmation to our own legitimacy does the content of this guide make sense.

Following Oliver Wendell Holmes' dictum, "If you believe in great things, you may be able to make other people believe in them, too." The "nitty-gritty" of politics and lobbying may vary as greatly as the personalities, values, and cultures of the players. But only with an underlying self-acceptance of the necessity and essential rightness of politics and advocacy will there be the necessary staying power to explore the many fascinating roads of the American political process.

One of the most frequent ways that citizens abdicate and surrender their power is by the mistaken belief that they (and their organization) are legally prohibited from "lobbying" to obtain their objectives. The truth is quite the contrary: Lobbying is a broadly protected constitutional right, defined loosely as any attempt to influence *specific legislation*. Advocacy is support for a cause you believe in, and may embrace a wide variety of activities and might, or might not, include lobbying. Lobbying always involves advocacy, but advocacy does not necessarily involve lobbying.

As Bob Smucker, veteran former lobbyist for Independent Sector, has noted, major social change in America starts with non-lobbying or grassroots advocacy and proceeds to lobbying. The civil rights movement, for example, included various forms of advocacy for equal rights--sit-ins, speeches, concerts, pickets, boycotts, marches, and demonstrations. Ultimately, this vigorous advocacy led to intense lobbying and enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other equal rights laws. Smucker notes:

"This kind of citizen action has been carried out repeatedly over the years by citizen groups working for the protection of women's rights, child labor laws, stricter laws against drunk driving and smoking, requirements for safe drinking water and clean air, disabled persons' rights, and many more. All initially combined a broad spectrum of non-lobbying advocacy activities, with lobbying employed somewhat later to achieve the needed change in public policy."

FROM SELF-AFFIRMATION TO POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

"Change is no longer threatening. It absorbs, enlarges, enriches. The unknown is friendly, interesting territory. Each insight widens the road, making the next state of travel, the next opening, easier."
- Marilyn Ferguson

"All politics is local."
-Thomas "Tip" O'Neil

O.K., so you are ready to accept the legitimacy of political activity. Now what? Voting power, the ability to influence the direction of even small blocs of voters, may be the most obvious way to make friends in the legislature before you need them. But for many, this kind of political activity simply does not match one's temperament. Not to worry! Fortunately, there are numerous other ways to amass political credit. For example, candidates for office never have enough volunteer workers for the host of chores, often quite mundane, which are necessary to mount a comprehensive campaign. From stuffing literature in envelopes to manning telephone campaigns and websites, from ringing doorbells on behalf of an officeseeker to driving voters to the polls, from writing press releases to hanging up campaign posters—there are never enough hands, certainly never sufficient paid workers, to do all that anxious candidates and their campaign managers want done. So those who volunteer and perform well will have automatic credit in their political bank. It follows that the individual or group producing multiple volunteers for a grateful candidate would garner even more of this credit.

Most important in this media-dominated age, helping your lawmaker to get favorable coverage on local television, radio, and print media is like gold in the bank. It is estimated, for example, that a local news event covered favorably on TV is worth more to a lawmaker than a $10-20,000 TV ad. Indeed, helping your legislator "make the news" is, these days, an indispensable part of the political process. Writing supportive letters and op-ed pieces to newspaper editors and letting your local reporters and editors know you value your legislator's good work are other actions you should take. Similarly, getting your friends

to call into local radio talk-shows with favorable comments about your policymaker is a service that is greatly appreciated.

Money, often described as the "mother's milk of politics," is almost always in short supply. Most officeseekers, feeling constantly underfinanced, particularly in this age of expensive electronic media, are impressed by even small campaign contributions. Better yet, if someone has the ability to gather or "bundle" $25 from each of 50 contributors or $250 each from five donors, politicians cannot fail to take notice. Veteran politicians observe that, even in this era of huge campaign finances, the "little guys," the voters, still *like to be asked* to participate by giving their $10 or $20 contribution. Because very few citizens contribute funds directly to candidates, the few who do stand out from the pack and are reasonably assured of access, a chance to plead their case. This initial access to the policymaker may not, in itself, guarantee the desired policy outcome, but it does provide an invaluable head start for most persons, in most circumstances.

Beyond votes, volunteers and dollars there are innumerable possibilities for building political capital in exchange for publicity and exposure of officeholders or candidates to potential voters. Candidates will go to great lengths in order "to meet the people"—at teas, picnics, meetings of professional associations, churches, bazaars, fairs, celebrations, annual conventions, and the like. Politicians devote incredible effort to figure out ways to be invited to see "the folks back home." As the tee-shirt reads, "Politicians will always be there when they need you." The thought that 50, 100 or more people will attend an event is often sufficient to induce a harried candidate to rework a tight schedule—and even to endure yet another leathery chicken dinner. Further assured that not only voters but the press, photographers and, best of all, television cameras will also be on hand, no earthly power can keep the politician away from your meeting!

Candidates recognize that being heard by the relative handful of voters who count, who tip the electoral balance, is an exceptionally difficult undertaking in this era of media overload and message proliferation. Yet, an unabashed show of enthusiasm, even gratitude, will generally result from even the most modest of invitations.

Knowing that you, the inviter, are at least temporarily in the driver's seat and that you have something of substantial value to offer the candidate is critical. Your attitude ought *not* be: "Mr. Legislator, I know I'm imposing, but is there any chance you might be able to find the time, someday, to talk with a few folks?" But *rather*: "Mr. Congressman, 75 of your constituents are eager to meet with you. When can we work out a convenient time on your schedule?" (To really "ice the cake" your request might add: "And several individuals wish to volunteer for work and fund-raising in your next campaign. Our organization also offers a modest honorarium in appreciation of your efforts in coming to speak with us.")

Recent public and media criticism of contributions, gifts and honoraria to legislators has resulted in adoption of a variety of state and federal ethics codes which severely restrict what is and is not legally permissible. Tax-exempt nonprofit organizations are generally barred from endorsing or contributing organizational funds to candidates. Individuals, however, may exercise their constitutional right to do so.

In the Congress, campaign contributions must never be solicited or given on official government premises and must not be tied to a *quid pro quo* whereby the legislator is expected to perform particular acts for parties at interest. Gifts and meals are strictly limited – generally to a value under $50. (Gifts of nominal value, like T-shirts and baseball caps, are permitted.) The entire subject is a minefield. It is best to consult the legislator's staff and the rules posted on www.house.gov/ethics before offering anything of tangible value.

All of this by no means exhausts the possible ways to prepare well in advance for a time of political need. In fact, elected office is increasingly a *permanent* campaign of fund-raising and publicity-seeking. Those who work on behalf of policymakers in non-election years are especially appreciated. Any campaign manager or candidate for office will volunteer a list of steps that are considered helpful to elected officials. Even the fact that you bothered to ask will not go unnoticed.

HOMEWORK PAYS OFF

"The mode through which the inevitable comes to pass is effort."
-Oliver Wendell Holmes

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them."
-George Bernard Shaw

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
-Darrell Royal paraphrasing Vince Lombardi

Most Americans wait for severe problems to emerge and then enter the political process tardily, reluctantly, and without careful preparation. If you and your colleagues have stored up political credits in advance of making an actual request for help, you are clearly in a small minority.

Let us assume that the time has come for you to test the political waters, to resolve an issue important to you. Where to begin? A bit of role-playing and a little introspection are first recommended in which you try to imagine where the legislator or other policymaker is likely to be "coming from." What are his/her most likely reactions to, in this illustrative case, "educators?" What is he likely to think when it is announced that "Mrs. Jones, an administrator in the Salem School District, wishes to see you?"[2]

While no single answer will correspond to all situations and to all personality types among politicians and legislators, over 40 years of listening to such political figures has convinced me that they are almost uniformly well-disposed to the importance of education but increasingly skeptical about educators, particularly teacher unions and some trade groups. Policymakers often believe that professionals in education and the human services don't understand the way the world is. Their initial mindset when such professionals come to see

[2] The points made here are probably applicable to any number of public and nonprofit fields of endeavor: employment training, youth development, community organization, health, housing, and human services.

them may be negative or at least guarded. That is, unless you are one of the rare breed of leader who has shown you understand the political process, appreciate the essential role of the politician in confronting the dilemmas of a complex and contentious democratic society and, most important, are "not too proud to get your hands dirty" with the less glamorous aspects of political reality.

Only then can you counter the stereotyped impressions of educators and other leaders in the nonprofit world that are held by many legislators and senior legislative staffers. These stereotypes were drawn from listening carefully to what policymakers say — usually in private[3] — about human service professionals and their associations. (As with all stereotypes or blanket indictments, politicians are prone to say: "Of course, I'm not talking about *you*, just those *other* guys.") What follows is an array of stereotypes voiced by some legislators, certainly not all, about a wide range of professionals in health, education, and the human services generally. The point of listing these criticisms is to alert you to the importance of avoiding giving them any credence by your actions.

Politicians' Views of Educators—In Their Own Words

1) ***Educators are arrogant*** and, worse yet, sanctimonious. They act as if they are the only ones who have high standards and a sincere commitment to honest public service. They act as if they have all the answers. They treat us as petty creatures, not very bright political hacks. They don't respect our knowledge and intelligence and, especially, our experience.

2) ***Educators don't communicate effectively***. Few groups speak less clearly, less concisely, and with more obfuscation. Instead of precise, comprehensible, here-and-now language, what we get is often Olympian, utopian, too abstract, too fuzzy to be helpful.

[3] Adapted from an experiential exercise with state legislators as described in my "Politicians and Educators: Two World Views," *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 1974, pp. 189-190. This article contains the second part of the equation, namely, the many stereotypes that educators hold of politicians. These stereotypes were reviewed in 2000 by a cross-section of former legislators and senior Congressional aides and appropriate revisions made.

The other side of this talking over our heads in "educationese" jargon and verbiage is a tendency to talk down to us, as if we were some lower form of animal life. Real understanding is often undermined by the way they communicate with us.

3) ***Educators don't understand the legitimacy and importance of the political process.*** This ignorance is expressed in many ways:

- They often view our difficult daily work of negotiating, compromising, balancing interests, and refining or fine-tuning public policies as dirty, or underhanded, or somehow even immoral. Educators show little appreciation for the real progress actually made but condemn us for letting the kids of America down.

- If we don't give educators everything they want, when they want it, some of them act as if incrementalism is evil. In contrast, most legislators believe that the long haul is nothing more than a series of short, constructive steps. Educators contradict sound political practice by splitting, that is, by playing off their part of education (higher, elementary, secondary, libraries, school boards, state education agencies, teachers, and others) against other education interests. Instead of a united educational front, we often are faced with warring factions–chief state school officers versus school superintendents, local school districts versus state authorities—a situation in which almost everyone loses. (In Washington, this criticism is heard far less frequently since the maturing of the Committee for Education Funding which claims to speak with a single voice for 100 separate groups.) Educational associations seem to be learning that a well-organized minority generally beats a disorganized majority.)

- They are reluctant to build coalitions with other educators and with non-educator groups, to advance larger social goals. Educators respond with righteous indignation that they are "above politics." Yet, some of the most effective lobbyists for education are actually organized labor, civil rights and

church groups, general citizens' associations and, recently, employers requiring highly skilled workers. (Recent pro-education newspaper ads sponsored by leading-edge firms like Intel and Microsoft were praised by several lawmakers.)

- Educators often play up to executive branch bureaucrats and sometimes take sides against legislatures. They ignore the fact that our various constitutions provide for co-equal branches of government with basic policy supposedly being forged in the legislative bodies, not handed down from the executive branch of government.

- Unlike most successful interest groups, educators don't support legitimate political processes with personal cash contributions or with organized volunteer help.

4) ***Educators mainly want more money***. They seldom recognize that we live in a tough world with many competing social priorities like health, veterans' benefits, senior citizens' needs, and many more. And they don't like the legislature acting to assure that tax dollars are well spent, but that's our job!

5) ***Educators mostly promote their own economic and professional interests.*** Sometimes it's hard for politicians to know whether what they propose is good for kids in school or the adults employed by the system. They spend so much energy talking about "the profession" that we seldom hear about children achieving. I'm particularly irate about the unions' protection of bad teachers.

6) ***Educators give lip service to "standards" and "accountability" but don't do enough to bring it about***. They are afraid to tell the tax-paying public what it gets for its huge investment in education. They say they agree with the need for accountability to achieve academic achievement, but then they tell us they are professional people and that we don't have to worry about their acting in an accountable manner. They say they are worried about "fair procedures" for measuring student progress, but

many of us see this as veiled opposition to true accountability. (They remind me of George Bernard Shaw's observation: "Every profession is a conspiracy against the laity.")

7) ***Educators are weak in supplying important information and sound analysis***. To frame effective social policy, we need solid facts, not pious generalities. We need practical, not idealized pie-in-the-sky responses to immediate problems. Sometimes, we suspect that some educational leaders and other human service officials even withhold essential information we need and are entitled to have.

8) ***Educators blow with the wind and are addicted to fads and quick cures***. They seldom assert their responsibility to lead, but rather, cave in to popularized notions and "movements" that usually lead to swift disillusionment when they don't produce quick results.

9) ***Educators blame everybody else for children's failure to learn***: uncaring parents, dysfunctional families, crumbling neighborhoods, Hollywood, TV and MTV, poverty and homelessness, etc. Excellent teachers and administrators can and do find ways to break through those social problems; they don't use them as excuses for non-performance.

All in all, with negative perceptions like these — factually valid or not — is it any wonder that the worlds of politics, education, and the human services generally are so often at odds? But forewarned is forearmed. These stereotypes need not be reinforced by behavior that feeds into them.

A START TOWARD BRIDGE-BUILDING

The grievances and gulfs separating educators and other human service professionals from politicians are many. But, a start can be made if both sides devote sincere attention to these troublesome world views or mindsets. Reaching out with some understanding of how "the other side" might view the forthcoming meeting can only help. It can forge a much-needed bridge over the troubled waters of contemporary policymaking.

After having put yourself in the policymakers' shoes, sensing how and why they might be predisposed toward you — and being careful to avoid reinforcement of any negative stereotyped impressions — additional homework is in order.

If you don't know your legislator personally, or are unfamiliar with his/her background and legislative district, you should consult Michael Barone's *The Almanac of American Politics*, the *U.S. Congressional Directory*, or its state equivalent, or other resources listed in the bibliography below and now widely available on the Internet. There, you'll read the lawmaker's biography and learn about his/her hometown, profession, educational background, stated issues of concern, membership in organizations, volunteer services, family members, length of service in the legislature, key staff members, addresses and telephone numbers –all potentially useful information in establishing rapport with the lawmaker and in helping you to plan your approach better.

You'll also learn the lawmaker's committee assignments and whether he/she is likely to have clout on substantive *authorization* committees — the ones defining specific programs and entitlements; *appropriations* committees — those providing actual dollars for the authorized programs; or *budget* committees — the increasingly critical bodies which set overall funding levels (sometimes in considerable detail) for government programs, e.g., defense spending or job training, preschools or college student financial aid. Depending on the member's assignment and your specific needs and interests, you may be able to work with him/her for a successful outcome or may need to cultivate other legislators who serve directly at "the right spots" in the committee structure.

Knowing who are the policymaker's key staff members is the next step in your research. This should include both the member's personal office staff (e.g., appointments secretary, legislative director, others) and staff of relevant committees and subcommittees. For staff, often as much as the officeholder himself/herself, exercise immense influence, particularly on the critical details of policy and implementation. Building sound working relationships with them may well be your best long-term investment.

Beyond the formal structures and personnel of government, be on the lookout for the lawmaker's informal network of family and friends—spouse, grown children, "foxhole buddies" from his military service, fraternity brothers, sorority sisters, athletic teammates, business partners, etc. Some of these may be won over to your cause and give you a helping hand with the member.

This guide stresses the importance of building human relationships, rather than mere knowledge of the political process or following a set of "how-to" steps. In this vein, the reader would profit from some thoughtful reflections on the policy process by Robert C. Andringa, whose work as a senior Congressional staff aide won wide respect on both sides of the political aisle and in national education policy circles.

"Legislation and public policy," Andringa wrote,[4] "are the product of an uneven amalgam of forces, pressures, prejudices— and even accidents. Some of the factors that have the greatest ultimate effect in shaping legislation nevertheless appear more often than others. Here, in a ranking of importance for which I take full responsibility, are the variables that emerge as the most significant:

1) *Personal judgment and values of usually no more than six to ten members of Congress and senior staff.*
   Major bills have many issues and components. Each bill or component is normally shaped and resolved by a small handful of people and later ratified by the full House and Senate. To a

[4] Adapted from "Eleven Factors Influencing Federal Education Legislation," in Institute for Educational Leadership. *Federalism at the Crossroads: Improving Educational Policy*. Washington, D.C.: 1976.

considerable degree, the experiences and judgments of these six to ten individuals (formed in large part by the following variables) shape the final decision.

2) *Strong views of respected and trusted friends.*
Each member has a few trusted friends with knowledge in some particular area. These are friends from his/her home area, experts with whom he or she has developed a friendship over the years, other members and their staffs, or individuals recommended by close associates. In many cases, their views and advice prevail over those of more nationally-recognized authorities.

3) *Assumptions about the economy and budget.*
The policy views or mindset of a member about the economy are often influential in creating new programs or in cutting back on program authorities. His or her sense of competing priorities will also prove to be important.

4) *Public opinion and the popular media.*
Most members do not support ideas which they feel do not have, or could not get, general public support. Many shape their perceptions about educational needs by reading popular, rather than specialized, publications. On the whole, only the few people most involved in an area tend to read education publications.

5) *Strong views and efforts of major interest groups.*
The education lobby is not one of the strongest in Washington, yet major associations and especially *coalitions* of associations, can leverage consideration of issues they feel are important.

6) *Descriptive information about federal programs.*
Most of this comes from the executive branch and a few educational associations. Members relate this to what they personally expect a program to accomplish. Many, however, are suspicious of self–serving materials emanating from federal agencies.

7) *Legislative hearings.*
Attendance is often low, but key members are usually present to hear educators present long, dull papers full of jargon. Many witnesses are not willing to be completely candid in formal, on-the-record sessions. Field hearings are more important, although they are infrequent.

8) *General Accounting Office reports and other independent reports on programs.*
Studies by the General Accounting Office (GAO) are accepted because it is an arm of the U.S. Congress and its studies are done at the request of, or in cooperation with, members. The same applies to the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Some other non-federal studies of existing federal programs are given similar credibility.

9) *Policy research studies and reports.*
These are often too long and full of jargon or arcane data that few understand. People on Capitol Hill have little time to read such things. Some studies use old data or come up with ideas members have long since rejected. These reports often have greater influence when their messages are carried indirectly, by the other influences mentioned above.

10) *Administration views and lobby efforts.*
Congress naturally places a low priority on Administration views when the political party in the majority is different from that of the President. In this case, proposals are often influenced more by budget constraints than sound policy. Executive Branch recommendations often are submitted too late in the process, but those of a technical nature to improve current programs have a much better rate of success.

All in all, while these influences play a role, the power of human relationships stands out. The opinions of fellow legislators and trusted staff, friends and family are generally the most effective route to securing a desired legislative outcome.

PERSONAL (AND PERSISTENT) COMMITMENT

"Apathy can only be overcome by enthusiasm and enthusiasm can only be aroused by two things: first, an ideal which takes the imagination by storm and, second, a definite, intelligible plan for carrying that ideal into practice."
-Arnold Toynbee

"There is no perfection of techniques that will substitute for the lift of spirit and heightened performance that comes from strong motivation. The world is moved by highly motivated people, by enthusiasts, by men and women who want something very much or believe very much."
-John W. Gardner

No matter how much biographical and statistical data you have consulted, real political mastery requires that you know the policymaker much more intimately. Hear the counsel of one veteran master of the political process:

> *"Don't guess! Know your representative! Where is he on the issue(s) and why? Can he be talked to directly? Can he be persuaded? Who can persuade him? Whom does he listen to and why? Are those people willing to work with you? Are you willing to try to get them to work with you?"*

Having considered your approach to your particular policymaker—and assuming you have determined to contact him/her directly rather than through intermediaries—there is still a range of choices. Should you make contact at home or the district office when he/she returns to the district? In Washington, D.C. (or the state capital)? By correspondence? By telephone? By e-mail? Directly, or through senior staff? Alone, or with others? The approach you use depends on the nature of the issue you wish to put before him/her, whether the issue is too technical for face-to-face conversation, on your own temperament or style, and what your "homework" and advanced preparations have informed you as to which approach would seem to work best with this particular policymaker or his/her staff.

Personal visits in the district or in the Capitol (state or federal) can be made by both individuals or groups. Group meetings, particularly when the visitors are "heavyweights-" persons of substantive consequence in their communities—tend to be difficult for a policymaker to pass up. Groups also bring a variety of viewpoints and expertise to the legislator's attention and enable members of the delegation to rest and recoup their thoughts while another holds forth. Individual contacts also carry great weight when that person is persuasive, articulate, authoritative in his/her field and, preferably, of some political importance to the lawmaker.

Bring along a photographer or video person so the lawmaker and your group can be featured in your organization's newsletter or, better yet, in the lawmaker's official communications back to the district. Best of all, if you can arrange local TV coverage of the meeting, you will have produced one very grateful lawmaker.

Leaders of nonprofit human service agencies need to know that they are considered by most politicians as having considerable *potential* clout. College presidents, especially land-grant and community college leaders, and teacher union heads, have large constituencies and are "close to the voters." Legislators know that most educated persons are actual voters who influence others to vote in far greater numbers, and that the general public views education and human services as very high priorities. This is no cause for smugness or arrogance; it is, rather, a clue to "getting in touch with one's own power.

Leaders of nonprofit agencies have an enormous edge when they are accompanied by young people, the "clients" of the programs they are advocating. Some of the most successful advocates of our time—Dorothy Stoneman of YouthBuild USA and youth service and conservation corps directors, for example—rarely approach political personalities without one or more young people as full participants in the meeting. Indeed, young people often carry the day as advocates for a program with otherwise crusty politicians who warm to their brief conversations with bright, enthusiastic and articulate young spokespeople. Youth are a potent resource who speak more forcefully and persuasively than older, paid professionals. (To paraphrase

the popular TV commercial, when visiting a politician, "Don't leave home without one!")

Here is how YouthBuild USA's Leadership Development Handbook describes their careful preparation for effective youth engagement in New York City's political process:

> *"... when we were organizing to appear at the City Council and call for jobs for young people, our members practiced every Wednesday night for three months. The young people practiced not only public speaking, but public image."*
>
> *"They practiced walking in an organized way, in single file, filling up every successive seat in a row rather than flowing into the Council in an undisciplined way. They practiced standing in unison and clapping together at the close of every speech of one of our supporters. They practiced sitting down together, as one. They wore no hats and chewed no gum. They knew that this degree of self-discipline, implying no threat but demonstrating planning and internal unity, would have an impact. It did."*

Regardless of whether you choose a visit as an individual or with a group, it is important to:

1) Be flexible in the times you are available to see the legislator, scheduling as far ahead as possible and being prepared to suggest or to accept alternative appointments, including meetings with a key staffer.

2) Be on time—and be prepared to wait. Legislators are usually extremely busy with often unpredictable schedules, especially when Congress or the state legislatures are in session. As they say in the Far East, "Bend with bamboo."

3) Prepare your case thoroughly and be extremely clear about what want to emerge from the meeting; don't hold back important material or speak in generalities, as this may be your only chance to educate the legislator.

4) Be brief and to the point. (Like Biblical Job, legislators complain that too many visitors "multiplieth words without knowledge"; they "ramble on." One visiting educator derailed a long-sought meeting by telling his representative: "Before beginning to speak, I'd like to say something..." As one veteran politician advises: "There's nothing wrong with having nothing to say–unless you insist on saying it.")

5) If you are with a group, appoint a single, articulate and organized spokesperson; agree on a common approach and avoid squabbling in front of the legislator. If you are accompanied by young people, let them participate fully and substantively, not serve merely as "window dressing."

6) Be informal and friendly, never bellicose and threatening. While there may well be exceptions, the general rule is to disagree without being disagreeable. Again, it is instructive to quote the leadership training methods of YouthBuild USA, one of the nation's most successful youth development programs:

> *"...it always works to show respect for the opposition, appreciation for whatever gains are made, and unity within the ranks based on shared vision and commitment to a better world. People respond to integrity, hard work, creative ideas, and love. To overcome the opposition it is not necessary or useful to threaten people; to mobilize support it is not necessary to promise people personal gain."*

7) Acknowledge the arguments of the other side of a controversial issue. As a citizen petitioning your policymaker for "redress of grievance," you want help from an informed and effective legislator, one who knows what liabilities may result from his/her help. Unless policymakers know all the countervailing risks and pitfalls they may well come to resent you or the issues you need help with, or both.

8) Before leaving, summarize the major points of your discussion and agree on follow-up actions by stated dates. Try to "clinch the sale" with specific commitments on your part and that of the lawmaker. "Giving your word and keeping it is the bedrock foundation of American politics," says no less an authority than former Speaker of the House of Representatives "Tip" O'Neill. So try to elicit a promise as specific as possible.

9) Use the occasion to give the policymaker something of political value, such as an invitation to address a large gathering, to write his/her views on the subject for publication in your organizational journal, an award or similar token recognition.

10) When you return home, follow up, preferably in writing. Reaffirm the areas of agreement reached and summarize any plan or commitments for future action.

Most especially, thank the lawmaker (and, separately, the staff) for their time and concern. Legislators, like all public officials, complain that they catch hell for almost everything and hardly ever hear a word of praise or thanks. So, search for friends in the legislative process and, when you find them, strengthen their hand with both useful information and some most welcome expressions of thanks and appreciation.

Politicians armor themselves against the real (or imagined) assaults of their constituents, the media and their opponents by developing their own brand of self-deprecating humor. Examples overheard: "I was burned in effigy. Not hung, but burned, because my constituents like to make their point!" Or: "My constituents worship the quicksand on which I walk." Even the most successful politicians identify with Caligula and, like him, "feel beleaguered and under-powered."

Several types of personal contacts have become standard tools in the lobbying/advocacy arsenal. These might include an annual celebration or commemoration, like Fourth of July, St. Patrick's Day, Columbus Day parade, the County Fair. Use these occasions

to invite incumbent lawmakers, provide them with publicity and encourage them to appear regularly and renew local contacts. School and campus visits and youth-run projects are particularly popular (especially if a camera or TV is there to record the interaction of legislator with photogenic and ebullient youth or children). Visits of policymakers to schools, job training programs, health care centers, and other real-life projects make far deeper impressions than being "talked at," regardless of the congeniality of the setting. Policymakers like to see for themselves. It's the people - their life stories and personal anecdotes - that they tend to remember and that move them to action.

Best of all, try to get your policymaker *engaged* in a hands-on project, working alongside youth and adults, so he/she has a visceral feel for what your program accomplishes, as well as the sense of personal satisfaction that such voluntary service offers to its participants.

Breakfast meetings during the legislators' at-home visits are increasingly popular because they enable the legislator to get an early start on a day filled with fence-mending and service to constituents. News releases of such events are generally highly desirable, but it is essential to coordinate their contents, release, and accompanying photographs with the legislator's or official's own press aides. Don't forget to use the story in your own organization's paper or newsletter and to inform local and neighborhood weeklies, as well as large-circulation, daily publications.

One type of highly desirable, continuing relationship deserves special attention. Many legislators have achieved authentic expert status in their respective policy areas. Students of all ages, from high school to graduate school, could profit substantially from exposure in their classes to such authoritative policymakers on a regular basis (e.g., "practitioner-in-residence") or even on *ad hoc* occasions. Members generally appreciate such opportunities, whether for personal growth, reflection, or public exposure. Some officials would highly prize an academic title (e.g. Adjunct or Visiting Professor). Benefits to the institution in the form of better-informed policymakers are certain

to emerge, even as have a rich variety of academically-valuable internships developed between the campus and the official's office.

Informal contacts of a periodic nature should also be thoroughly explored and then nurtured. Some organizations routinely send notices of their meetings to their state and federal representatives and are pleasantly surprised at the number of times these lawmakers "just happened to be in the neighborhood" and come by to "shake a few hands and say a few words." For the politician, such opportunities are "pure gold"— a chance to see many constituents at one time. It's also amazing how much time busy policymakers have when TV cameras or local reporters are present! Gratitude for such informal opportunities is often expressed down the road when your organization has specific objectives to pursue.

Legislative briefings organized by groups are increasingly used to demonstrate widespread community support for a cause. To such a carefully planned meeting invitations might be extended to educators and human service administrators, representative parents and students, key figures in agriculture, labor, commerce and industry, the media, and friends and staff aides of the legislator from your district. A well-planned, brief program which stresses the positive contributions your particular activity is making to the community at large is generally well-received by legislators who hear many "horror stories" and complaints each day but only occasional good news and "success stories" from their constituents. (Again, follow-up and thank-you letters from attendees at such briefings are a good investment.)

Awards from your organization accompanied by publicity mean much to the politician and executive officeholder. Often, they are the only external "validation" for their work. But awards must be well thought-out. Their citation should be neither frivolous nor cliche-ridden. Naturally, awards should not be granted so frequently as to debase their value. Often, a well-framed certificate, suitably inscribed, accomplishes your purpose, while a gaudy, tasteless or expensive gold loving cup may not. As in all such matters involving personal taste, prior consultation with the legislator's staff, spouse

or other confidant beforehand makes good sense. In any case, it is likely that your award will be proudly displayed on the politician's office wall.

And don't forget to thank the member's staff for their contributions. Like staffs everywhere, they think they do all the work while the boss gets all the credit. Members, after all, are spread thinly over many issues and many competing demands. Staff, on the other hand, often are able to concentrate and follow up on individual projects, ideas and promises. They are the ones who develop the detailed specifications of legislation, organize committee hearings, draft questions for witnesses (and sometimes suggested responses as well), hammer out compromises with other members' staff, and prepare their bosses to speak forcefully and persuasively. Thus, it comes as no surprise that politically savvy associations often spend more time on the cultivation of staff than they do on members. Staff are invited to visit educational institutions and programs, speak to classes, meet community leaders and develop the substantive expertise and first-hand knowledge that will subsequently be reflected in the final legislative product. In short, staff are often crucial to making things happen. So remember them, too, in order to reap larger dividends.

WORKING AT A DISTANCE

"God could not be everywhere, so he made mothers —
and Western Union / and Email."
-19th Century slogan, as amended

"Politics is a contact sport," say its most skilled practitioners. Letters, overnight messages, reports and e-mail are simply poor substitutes for long-term, carefully nourished personal interactions. Yet, given the pressures of our era and the vast distances of our country, less personal, face-less communications do play a useful role in promoting your case.

In general, the correspondence that counts with policymakers is that which shows evidence of thought and conviction, rather than a mere outpouring of robot-typed form letters or a mass of e-mails with identical messages. Every politician knows that a constituent who takes the time to write an original letter probably cares deeply enough to act on those convictions at the polls. Intensity of feelings almost always trumps mere quantity. While lawmakers are under no automatic obligation to "vote with their mail," most do care about what their constituents — and thoughtful people generally — think on the issues of the day. "Open letters" and "op-eds" to the newspapers, particularly from "people who count" back home, carry even greater weight because the lawmaker knows they have been read by thousands of his/her local constituents.

There are no definitive rules for writing a good letter or e-mail to a policymaker. But, here are some edited and expanded suggestions made by some of Washington, D.C.'s most experienced interest groups. (Consult the recommended readings below for elaboration on this list.)

1) Letters and e-mail should be clear, brief, courteous, and factual. Simple English, not jargon, is essential. Most everything worth saying can be said in 1-2 pages, with attachments as necessary.

2) Be original; never use form letters or send copies as originals.

3) Introduce yourself. Briefly describe yourself and your organization if you believe the policymaker is not already so informed.

4) Write about a single subject in each letter or e-mail. Don't get too cumbersome or technical with a clutter of issues.

5) Refer to any pending legislative bill by number and name. Spell the sponsor's name correctly!

6) Explain clearly why the proposed bill or appropriation is good or bad for your interests. Show specifically how the proposal will affect the lawmaker's district. Be concrete, mentioning actual names of schools, particular neighborhoods, communities or other local landmarks.

7) Back up your arguments with pertinent facts and figures, but never exaggerate and don't bury your lawmaker in an avalanche of statistics. As Duncan Wyse (of the Oregon Progress Board) once remarked: "Data shall set you free...but first it will make you mad as hell." So, do not assume your statistics must always outweigh the lawmaker's own experience and judgment. Politicians have learned that if you torture statistics long enough, they'll confess to almost anything.

8) Include newspaper and journal articles pertinent to the issue. Supportive editorials and "op-eds" from local newspapers also carry weight.

9) Ask for a reply regarding the policymaker's position on the issue.

10) If that reply is noncommittal, write again, but avoid intimidation, threats, or undue pressure. Keep trying to make that "sale."

11) If the legislator supports you, send a letter of appreciation and some further factual ammunition to help your cause along.

12) When you or your colleagues have written some good letters or articles on the subject, ask the member to insert them in the *Congressional Record* (or state legislative journals) so others might share in the discussion. The act of having to write an introduction to your material in the *Record* often pushes the member into outright advocacy of your position.

13) Keep writing and urge others to write, as informatively and as often as possible. Do not assume your lawmaker has nothing else on his/her mind. Persistence, patience and "staying in touch" are the best means of overcoming remote distances and the competing demands and pressures of other people's interests. Practice the political counsel of Margaret Thatcher, the former British Prime Minister: "I'm extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end."

LET GEORGE — AND THE ASSOCIATION — DO IT!

"I pay my dues to the association and they hire those high-paid Washington lobbyists who are supposed to look out for my interests. Yet the association is always asking me to get in direct touch with my Congressman for this or that emergency. I wonder what they're doing in Washington with my dues money anyway!"

Variations of this complaint are often heard from the field, while Washington association lobbyists complain about the political naivete and passivity of their membership. However, political sophistication and activism of the rank-and-file are increasing. These days, fewer educators and non-profit organization leaders seem to feel that political action is "dirty" or beneath their dignity. Fewer local leaders seem to believe that sound public policies emerge simply because they are "right on the merits." Three decades of coalitions on behalf of larger federal appropriations, notably by the Committee for Education Funding, have made educators more comfortable with political action. Political action committees and substantial campaign contributions, particularly from teacher unions, have given education and other nonprofit agencies greater clout in the political process than just a few years ago. A substantial number of educators have also successfully run for office in the Congress and many state legislatures.

Nevertheless, there's still a very large need for raising political consciousness and participation. Many local educators and other community leaders are still unaware of both their own substantial potential power and the very real limitations of their paid professional representatives in the capital. For the truth is that, even experienced association staff are often viewed merely as "hired guns" in the eyes of the legislature or executive agencies. Insofar as they are knowledgeable about local needs and desires and are equipped with useful information, they may be accorded access and the opportunity to state the association's case.

Few professional headquarters staff are as effective as well-informed and articulate *constituents* who build and maintain personal links

with their policymakers. (Remember: "All politics is local.") Association lobbyists know and strongly encourage these direct linkages, arrange to have respected local constituents testify at key hearings, and otherwise carry the association's case directly to policymakers, with or without accompanying headquarters staff. Perhaps most important, Washington association officials need to know that they can call on their network of politically astute and informed member contacts during critical moments in the political process and that the network will respond quickly, intelligently and, if need be, repeatedly.

Virtually all associations maintain such networks of local political activists, usually organized along congressional or other legislative district lines—one or more local activists for every elected representative. This network is kept informed of key developments by the association staff on a year-round basis through e-mail, special bulletins, briefings, legislative workshops, newsletters, telephone conference calls, mailed videocassettes, and the like. When key votes are about to be taken (or major decisions formulated by the executive branch), the association staff—unable to be everywhere at once—activates its electronic network with specific assignments.

For many years, at the National Association of State University and Land-Grant Colleges, for example, five telephone calls start a roster of others making five pre-arranged calls each. Nowadays, e-mails alert the entire network in minutes. Network participants may be asked to telephone their representative in order to get a current "head count." How will the 435 members of the House of Representatives (or any other body) vote on a particular bill or amendment? Alternatively, a good network can inform legislators of the proposed legislation's potential effects at the local level, on individual institutions and persons. This feedback is a welcome antidote to often grand and impractical ideas hatched in the rarefied air of the capital. In minutes, or at most a few hours, useful responses from the field arrive at association headquarters. The "hired guns" find out whether their months of planning and hard work are paying off, where they are still vulnerable, where additional effort might prove rewarding, what kinds of compromise amendments are

suggested by field responses, which of the network participants are "on the ball" with reliable and informed forecasts and, conversely, which are not carrying their fair share of legislative network responsibility.

The point simply is that in a country (or many states) as large as ours, with legislatures having hundreds of members who are generally unbound by party discipline or party-held policy, it is impossible for "George and the Association" to touch all the bases, to know and be everywhere. Only a politically astute membership, a networked and sophisticated rank-and-file, can do that. Ultimately, power and influence are capacities you earn for yourself, not attributes that a paid staff alone can acquire for you.

TESTIMONY—ONLY THE 40-YARD LINE

"There are no great men, only great committees."
-Charles Addams

Many times, an interest group's objective can be obtained without legislative action. Sometimes, for example, what a group seeks is a favorable ruling on a disputed or unclear definition in law or regulation. Other times all that is needed is a recommendation for an executive branch appointment, a meeting with the President or another high-ranking official, or a general commendation of the interest group's legitimacy. Usually, however, organizations turn to legislatures for new laws authorizing certain activities, including the expenditure of public monies for particular objectives. When this is the case, effective testimony and sensitive day-to-day lobbying are essential.

While the nominal or stated objective of a formal legislative hearing is to obtain information about the necessity or desirability of a proposed law or appropriation of funds, often the purpose is to allow lawmakers to discern whether the bill is politically advantageous or detrimental to them. Substance aside, what are the political consequences of a vote for or against a given measure? Is this the kind of narrow issue that can safely be championed because it doesn't cost too much and because it won't anger important constituencies? While making its advocates happy, whom will it disturb? Is the bill merely "good for the country," which may be enough to warrant support, or is there also political advantage to be secured? That would make it even more attractive to the legislator.

In short, hearings before a legislative or administrative body help lawmakers and executives legitimize the political process in two ways: first, they generate *scientific legitimacy* by disclosing relevant facts, theories, and expert opinion. Second, hearings confer *democratic legitimacy* by seeming to give all relevant interests and shades of opinion a chance to be aired. Hearings, then, are a valuable public forum for both fact and opinion to have their "day in court."

Frequently, interested parties do not testify themselves but work behind the scenes to arrange witnesses of their choosing. Working with members or key staff, they get "big name" witnesses invited because they know such persons attract above-average attendance at the hearings, including legislators and especially the media.

In this context, it is best to get support from someone outside of the field directly benefiting from the proposed legislation. Poets, writers and other humanists seeking funding for the National Endowment on the Humanities generally don't have the credibility of a Nobel Laureate physicist or a popularly-elected governor who passionately argue the centrality of the arts and humanities in our national life. Thus, the late Admiral Hyman Rickover of nuclear submarine fame was for many years a regular presence at hearings of the congressional education committees. His crusty, anti-education establishment views always stimulated lively interest, largely because the legislators knew he was not appearing in order to feather his own nest. Similarly, governors, mayors, church, and union leaders probably carry more weight in hearings than educators and human service administrators. Recently, mega millionaire corporate leaders, testifying on behalf of the urgency of education reform, have been star witnesses in Congress and state legislatures.

Because legislators are eager to learn who gets helped and who gets hurt, each piece of testimony should state at the outset who the witness is, who he/she represents, and what experience or expertise he/she has for making the claims that follow. Alternatively, you can arrange to be introduced to the committee conducting the hearings by your own representative and, if possible, to have the committee chairman or other key legislator offer some words of praise about you and your organization to precede your prepared statement. Such staging will prime the committee to hear your message in the most favorable light.

As in preparing for a personal or group meeting with a policymaker, there is "homework" that should have been carefully planned and completed. Among other things, you should:

1) *Learn* who the committee members and key staffers are, match their photos to biographical sketches, pronounce and spell their names correctly, and gain relevant information to shape the outcome you desire;

2) *Prepare* data—and, if possible, compelling graphics—which convey the essence of your message. The currency of the public policy process is hard and authoritative information. Members need facts to convince them of your case and to embolden them to carry your cause through the next stages of the legislative process. A well-crafted sound bite or capsule argument can be enormously helpful. Without such armaments—which the legislator usually expects *you* to provide—few unprepared advocates and their requests survive. As former U.S. Senator William Hathaway observed, "taking a bill to the floor of the Senate without adequate supporting information will make you nostalgic for the good old days of the Spanish Inquisition!"

3) *Gather* human interest stories, anecdotes and other memorable examples which put your case in appealing human, not solely empirical, terms. Elected officials, in particular, *truly like to help people*. They wish to believe that the consequence of their actions is to improve the lot of the nation at large and their constituents in particular. They wish to believe there is a direct connection between the legislative process and bettering the welfare of people. Like most of us, they want to feel their legislative work gives *meaning* to their professional lives. Your concrete examples of positive outcomes and "good news"—or of abject and appalling unmet needs—will help to move the hearings from abstraction to concrete action.

Veteran Washington observers like to recall the committee hearing on a reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. After the usual parade of organization and institutional witnesses, the committee received testimony from a music student at the Oberlin College Conservatory who had received a variety of federal student financial assistance. The student "testified" by playing

a Frederic Chopin piece brilliantly on a nearby piano. The Congressmen were deeply moved, remarking that, beyond all the impersonal data, here was a concrete example of how federal student aid creates opportunities for talented persons to fulfill their human potential.

Similarly, nothing is more effective than the appearance and testimony of children and youth with disabilities who have been helped through special education and vocational rehabilitation funding to take their rightful place in society.

4) *Forge* alliances and coalitions with other groups that support your policy agenda. In general in the democratic political process, the larger and more unified the groups speaking with one voice and for a clearly-defined objective the more attention will be paid to your demands.

5) *Cultivate* a "knight" or a "champion"—a particular lawmaker whom you have carefully briefed to carry the workload with his/her colleagues in committee and, later, on the legislature's floor. Not all legislators are work horses. Some quickly earn their reputation as only "show horses." A champion is a legislator who genuinely cares about the subject and who, in the process of winning victories for it, grows to enjoy his or her special reputation and acclaim as a champion of that cause. He/she reads avidly in the field, is recognized by his/her legislative colleagues and others as an expert. Over time, the champion becomes your chief advocate inside the legislature, who will speak up for your cause even without being pushed by you to do so.

This phenomenon of "conversion through doing" is remarked upon by veteran lobbyists. When a legislator has been successfully working on your behalf, and has gained external approbation and internal satisfaction from the work, he/she generally becomes further linked with your goals which, in turn, generates ever more support, initiative and risk-taking in the future.

Some other pointers on the process of testimony are even more straightforward but no less important:

1) Provide sufficient copies of your statement (25-200, depending on the legislative forum) and deliver them to the committee days or hours in advance of your testimony (usually 24-72 hours). Many a key legislator or staffer becomes "out of sorts" when there is no copy of your testimony available in time to read it and to prepare questions in advance.

2) Prepare a crisp overview of your formal statement. This can serve as a cover page of your key points and the most newsworthy findings, the kinds of dramatic and quotable phrases that you hope the media and your fellow advocates will pick up and use. (Former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph Califano was a master at having his testimony repeated on TV and in lead newspaper stories. Cigarette smoking, he said, is "Creeping Cancer"— a line too good for media to ignore. President Clinton also successfully used shorthand slogans: "End welfare as we know it." Of affirmative action: "Mend it, don't end it.") A carefully crafted sound bite, a memorable poetic phrase is often what the legislator remembers and the media repeats.

3) Speak as extemporaneously as possible, summarizing your views without digressions or mumbling. If you must read from the prepared text, five minutes (some staffers say 10) is the absolute maximum, so plan your statement accordingly. What the legislators raise in the question-and-answer period is what they remember far better than your formal statement. The best testimony is articulate, informative, engaging and authoritative (without being pompous). Tasteful humor is always in order. Remember, too, that the purpose of your testimony is not to tell the committee how much you know, but rather to win adherents to your point of view.

4) Pay attention and be aware of what has been said by previous witnesses and don't repeat stale points—unless you know that a certain point worked well before and wish to reinforce it in the committee's collective mind.

5) Emphasize how your proposal will help children, youth and vulnerable people, not just your professional guild or relatively privileged colleagues.

6) Attend the hearings before and after your own statement. Your presence demonstrates your (and your association's) concerns, gives added credibility to the process, and reinforces your sponsor's (champion's) belief that the bill warrants favorable action as soon as possible because it enjoys active support, and is sound on the merits. Conversely, saying your piece and then leaving while the hearing is still in progress may well be interpreted as disrespect for the legislative process. Is your time more valuable than that of the legislators and the other witnesses?

7) Be both positive and unambiguous. (Don't send unclear messages in the form of the proverbial "Jewish telegram:" "Start worrying! Letter follows.") As young YouthBuild advocates are counseled: "We don't protest, we propose. We don't attack, we persuade." Avoid threats or predictions of dire political consequences if your proposal isn't approved. And, as always, thank the legislators for their concern for your cause and for their favorable consideration of your proposal.

8) Express your convictions and don't be afraid of your expertise. While trying to win friends for your cause, stand firm—politely and with well-stated evidence—for the essentials you believe to be true. (Not like the man interviewing for a scarce teaching position who, when asked whether the Mississippi River flowed north or south, replied that he could teach it either way.) If you don't know the answer to a policymaker's query, say so and get back to him/her with appropriate answers. Guessing destroys your credibility.

ADVANCING TOWARD THE GOAL LINE

"To succeed, planning alone is insufficient. One must improvise as well."
- Isaac Asimov

"Until you've been in politics you've never really been alive. It's the only sport for grownups—all other games are for kids."
-cited by Alan Rosenthal

Practitioners of the legislative process often come to love it and even, in time, to respect it! When that moment arrives, many of these "political junkies" and fire-tested veterans wish to share their lore and learning with others newly embarked on a legislative adventure.

In the spirit of sharing, as well as of summing up this guide, I offer some "golden rules" for successful representation with public officials of all types, elected and appointed.

1) Be fair to public officials. With rare exceptions, they are honest and intelligent professionals who want to do the right thing. Your job is to inform them effectively about what you think is right...and then back them up with information and organized support.

2) Avoid cynicism. Government and politics may be faulty, but so is every profession. A disdainful attitude is an expensive luxury these days because it "poisons the well" and immobilizes the will to work for social betterment. ("Those who live on an island should not make an enemy of the sea." Or try a maxim of former Speaker of the House of Representatives Sam Rayburn: "Never spit chewing tobacco on the cake you hope to eat yourself.") In short, the political process we too often disparage is still our best hope of effecting constructive social change.

3) Be understanding. Put yourself in the public official's place. Try to understand his/her problems, outlook and aims. Then you are more likely to persuade him/her to do the same in understanding yours.

4) Be friendly. Don't contact public officials only when you want their help. Take pains to keep in touch with them *throughout* the year, every year. (Lyndon Baines Johnson again: "You have the kind of friends *you are*. Get to be part of your legislator's future!")

5) Be reasonable. Recognize there are legitimate differences of opinion. Never indulge in threats or recriminations; they are confessions of weakness. Keep working to change the other person's mind.

6) Be appreciative. Commend the right things public officials do; that's the way you like to be treated. Remember that public officials, often feeling under siege, need your "strokes" of recognition, publicity, visibility, validation, appreciation.

7) Be charitable—up to a point. The failure of public officials to do what you want may be your responsibility if you have not done a good job in preparing, presenting, and following through on your case. If you can't change their minds, of course, you can always fall back on the time-hallowed rule of thumb for American politics: "Don't get mad—get even." Every elected public official knows that you will have a chance to do just that at the ballot box on the next election day. But retribution at the polls should be a last resort, not a common tactic.

8) Be constructive. You don't like to be scolded, pestered, or preached to. Neither do public officials. Rather than negative carping, present a positive alternative, a new way of looking at the problem, a constructive formula for solving an old impasse.

9) Be cooperative. If a public official makes a reasonable request, try to comply with it. Don't back away for fear that it's a "compromise" or that you're "getting into politics." (If you still think this way, this guide is a miserable failure in attitudinal adjustment!)

10) Be realistic and persistent. Remember that controversial legislation and regulation usually result in a compromise not wholly satisfactory to any one contending party. This is the principle of "Rough or Approximate Justice"; it has always been and will always be so in a democracy. Progress, although incremental, is no less real—and it may even be more enduring for the evolutionary development that builds wider support and longevity.

11) Be practical. Recognize that each lawmaker has basic commitments and that a certain amount of vote-trading (log-rolling) goes on in all legislatures. Don't chastise lawmakers who normally support you if they vote against just one of your objectives. This doesn't necessarily mean that they have deserted your whole program. Give them the benefit of the doubt; the lawmaker will appreciate it and remember that you did. Remember, too, that while some votes may be firmly committed, there will be many others—on both sides of the partisan aisle—that can be swayed on the basis of sound arguments, properly presented and well documented.

12) Be a good opponent. Fight issues, not personalities. And again, be ready with alternative solutions to problems and shortcomings, as well as with responsible criticism. This is fair and constructive opposition that builds long-term support for your position.

13) Be informed. Do your homework and establish a reputation for reliability. Never meet with public officials or candidates to advocate a position without first studying the facts and the arguments, pro and con, as well as the context of rules and politics in which the decision will be made. The mere fact that you want a public official to adopt your position is seldom sufficient.

14) Be trustworthy. When promises are made, keep them. This is a cardinal rule of politics. If you tell a public official you'll do something, stick to your end of the bargain.

15) Be loyal. Avoid surprising your friends with unannounced *strategems. Don't change* horses in the middle of the stream. Never leave officials out on a limb by changing your position after they have publicly agreed to the action you have urged upon them.

16) Evaluate and weigh the issues; don't panic at each engagement. For example, many bills are tossed into the legislative hopper "by request" and are never really intended to become law. So don't criticize lawmakers for every bill they introduce, and don't sound the panic alarm until you're sure a bill or legislative action is "for real."

17) Be discreet. Participation in discussions about lawmakers and other officials being "bought," "fixed," or "paid off" is worse than useless. You have absolutely nothing to gain and much to lose by baseless speculations.

18) Be generous. Remember in success everyone can claim credit. Lawmakers often remark: "Victory has a thousand fathers; defeat is an orphan." Therefore, thank policymakers for their positive acts at least as often as you lament when they went wrong. Let them know you are watching their record closely and are at least as ready to reward and praise as you are to condemn and punish at the polls.

19) Be visionary. Especially when it comes to the political process, there is seldom an absolute and final defeat. A loss with one lawmaker may lead to finding a better champion elsewhere. An opposing legislator one day may be your strongest ally the next. Failure in committee may be overturned on the legislative floor. Debate in one chamber may often be reversed in the other. Victory may be snatched from the jaws of defeat in a conference committee. An executive veto may be overridden by the legislature...and so on. The shortest distance between two points is seldom a straight line.

Thus, in a democracy, most decisions are rarely truly final. The job of government agencies and legislators is to offer interim or temporary solutions to major problems. As distinguished economist Kenneth Boulding has written:

> *"We live in a perpetual state of unresolved conflict. A decision is a partial resolution of conflict...The majority does not rule; a majority decision is simply a setting of the terms under which the minority continues the discussion—a discussion which presumably goes on."*

Which leads to point 20):

20) Practice energetic work and the importance of persistence. In the immortal words of Charlie Chan: "Everything cometh to he who waiteth, as long as he worketh like hell in the meantime!"

On this final point alone, volumes could be written, adorned by lively case studies. Of all the political assets, stamina, endurance and persistence are surely the most underrated but indispensable ingredients of success. Legislators may shrug off one visit or one letter or a single constituent, but few will ignore informed and insistent demands. Lawmakers receiving only 20-50 communications over a short period of time have been known to exclaim: "They're really on my back on this one! I've got to move!"

The problem is that most participants in the political process merely dabble. Having written a letter, made one visit or a single telephone call they feel they've done their job: "Let the Association carry on for me!" But success is usually long in coming, many a bill taking years to enactment. There are simply no known shortcuts to checking in with lawmakers and their staff and staying in continuous touch with them, one's association and cooperating allies. And always remember that tomorrow is another day and that few defeats are really final.

IN CONCLUSION — AND AT THE BEGINNING

"Faith and action—the future is ours."
-Brigham Young

"Be prepared for long hours, deep disappointments, ongoing frustrations, and periodic uncertainty about the impact of it all. You can also anticipate great moments of success as new ideas are generated, exciting projects are completed, deep relationships are formed, and many individual young people gain a new level of confidence, skill, and freedom to act on their own intelligent vision for a better world."
-YouthBuild USA Leadership Development Handbook

Victory in legislation and public policy—like success in other walks of life—has its roots in sound organization, thoughtful planning, unceasing cooperation, imaginative liaison, constant surveillance, and just plain hard work. While there are no guarantees of success—certainly none that could flow from adherence to any guide —satisfaction should come more often to those who care enough to practice the straight-forward prescriptions recommended in these pages.

It is time to close this guide and to encourage its readers to go out and become "experiential." Effective advocacy is not so much taught as it is learned through personal application. The ultimate truth of this guide's assertions rests on the reader's ability to make this counsel work in actual practice. I invite you to try.

However, lest the reader of this guide come away with the erroneous impression that mastery of *techniques* is at the core of successful advocacy, a concluding note is in order: The most successful advocates in my experience had mastered the political wisdom reported in this guide. Far more powerful, however, was their *belief system*, their sense of the moral rightness, the justice, of their objectives in the fields of education, employment training, youth development, and essential human services. Alert and alive to the pain and distress of others, and with a vision of a better world as it

could one day be, they found within themselves the life-sustaining force, the energy and persistence to reach goals perceived by them as right and just. Sound technique *plus* strong conviction are far superior to either acting alone.

"A different world cannot be built by indifferent people."
-anonymous

"We do not yet have justice, equal and practical, for the poor, for the members of minority groups, for the criminally accused, for the displaced persons of the technological revolution, for alienated youth, for the urban masses...Ugly inequities continue to mar the face of our nation. We are surely nearer the beginning than the end of the struggle."
-Justice William Brennan

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
-Margaret Mead

"It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."
-Robert F. Kennedy

"We must be the change we wish to see in the world."
-Mohandas K. (Mahatma) Gandhi

GOING DEEPER: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

Space does not permit a comprehensive discussion of the many steps in the legislative process which follow the completion of formal testimony. Fortunately, a number of excellent guides may be consulted for detailed descriptions of the rules and procedures which govern further legislative consideration. It is essential, as in any game requiring skill, that you learn these rules and procedures — preferably before you unwittingly violate them.

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